

Examining the Interdepartmental Conflict between the Administrative and Operational Departments at Marriott Highcliff Hotel, Bournemouth: A Comprehensive Analysis

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Abstract

The hotel business requires constant adaptation and efficient communication between departments to provide outstanding guest experiences and operational efficiency. This study examines the intricate dynamics of conflicts that arise between the administrative and operational departments at the Marriott Highcliff Hotel in Bournemouth, UK. Marriott International, a significant participant in the hospitality business, manages the hotel. The purpose of this study is to identify the factors that contribute to these conflicts, as well as the consequences of those conflicts, and to provide actionable strategies for enhancing departmental cooperation. The research explores the implications of these conflicts on performance as well as visitors' level of pleasure using a case study methodology. It utilises both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, such as interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings underscore substantial obstacles in interdepartmental communication, which lead to a decline in staff morale and productivity. The report provides actionable suggestions for conflict resolution tactics to enhance organisational productivity and bolster interdepartmental connections, offering useful perspectives for the wider hospitality sector. This thorough examination highlights the significance of resolving internal disagreements to retain the competitive advantage and exceptional service quality associated with Marriott International. The findings from this research are critical for promoting a cohesive work environment and ensuring the continued prosperity of hospitality organisations around the world.

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1.0 Introduction

The hotel sector is naturally dynamic, requiring constant adaptation and adaptability to achieve success. Effective communication across departments is critical for providing excellent visitor experiences and seamless operations (Suckley et al., 2013; Dobson and Suckley, 2015). This study investigates the complicated dynamics of departmental conflicts at the Marriott Highcliff Hotel in Bournemouth, UK. These conflicts are representative of the broader issues and possibilities encountered by the hospitality industry (Kharouf et al., 2018). The hotel, managed by Marriott International, is well-known for its exceptional service and breathtaking views (Carson, 2019; Marriott International, 2023), as stated on their official website (www.marriott.com, 2024). However, it is difficult to provide smooth coordination between administrative and operational divisions, which is vital to success.

The study's goal is to examine the root causes and repercussions of departmental disagreements and give effective remedies (Harrington, 2001). The goals include identifying the root causes of disputes, measuring their influence on performance and visitor satisfaction, and developing effective conflict resolution solutions (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2019). The study aims to uncover variations between departments, analyse the effects of conflicts on operations, and devise strategies to minimise their influence (Gondal and Shahbaz, 2012; Cresswell, 2024).

The objectives of this study are to analyze departmental conflicts, investigate their sources and effects, evaluate their impacts, suggest potential remedies, and understand the problems in interdepartmental communication. The research includes a thorough review of current literature, an assessment of specific cases, the identification and evaluation of conflicts, and the development of ways to resolve them (Lacerenza et al., 2018; Webster et al., 2019; Linhardt et al., 2023). The goal is to improve operational performance and strengthen interdepartmental relationships (Mullins, 2017). The results of this research are crucial for the survival of hospitality companies all over the world (Yusuf and Anuar, 2014; Yavas et al., 2011; Flink, 2013).

2.0 Literature Review

This paper offers a thorough review of the literature already in publication, therefore offering a thorough understanding of the conflicts that develop between various departments in the hotel sector. Interdepartmental conflicts in the hotel industry are a key topic of study owing to their potential influence on both organisational performance and customer satisfaction (Robbins, Judge, & Millett, 2015; Eunice et al., 2015; Jung et al., 2023). This thorough study presents a detailed examination of significant findings, theoretical frameworks, and possible restrictions for future research into departmental conflicts in the hotel industry.

When many departments or functional units within an organisation intersect, interdepartmental conflicts emerge. Disagreements of this sort may considerably reduce operational efficiency and jeopardise the quality of client experiences in the hotel business, where flawless coordination and great service are critical (Gautier et al., 2022; Eliyahu, 2020; Naseem et al., 2011). Multiple studies have examined the nature and behaviour of interdepartmental conflicts in hotels. Suckley et al. conducted a study in 2013 on the issues of communication failures and conflicting priorities between the operational and administrative departments, a study that also applies to the Marriott Highcliff Hotel. Omisore and Abiodun (2014) examined comparable conflicts between the housekeeping and front offices, emphasising the importance of resource allocation and role ambiguity in contributing to these disagreements.

The literature documents a variety of explanations and origins for interdepartmental conflicts in hospitality situations. Role ambiguity is a scenario in which there is overlap in duties and unclear job responsibilities, leading to conflict and misunderstanding within a department. In addition, the existence of resource constraints, such as insufficient staff or budget allocation, might worsen tensions within departments (Kozlowski and Ilgen, 2019; Laslo and Goldberg, 2008). When there are differences in departmental priorities, goals, and communication styles, conflicts intensify more (Suff, 2020; Hyatt and Gruenglas, 2023).

Interdepartmental disagreements have a significant impact on an organisation's performance and productivity in a variety of ways. Researchers have linked

unresolved disagreements to negative effects like lower employee morale, job dissatisfaction, and increased turnover rates (Yusuf & Anuar, 2014; Parashar & Sharma, 2020; Paresashvili et al., 2021).

Conflicts can also disrupt operational operations, resulting in errors, delays in service, and negative guest experiences (Sarel and Marmorstein, 1998; Harrington, 2001; Cullati et al., 2019). Ultimately, persistent conflicts between different departments might potentially harm the reputation and financial prosperity of hospitality enterprises (Kharouf et al., 2018).

The academic literature on disputes across departments uses theoretical frameworks to clarify the underlying processes and dynamics. Social exchange theory posits that departments engage in reciprocal exchanges, potentially leading to disputes if perceived as unfair (Jehn, 1997). In contrast, conflict theory emphasises the significance of power asymmetry and conflicting interests in engendering discord among departments (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2019).

These theoretical perspectives possess an all-encompassing comprehension of the intricacy of conflicts that arise within organisational contexts. Potential avenues for future research and unmet research needs remain. Despite the expanding corpus of studies on interdepartmental disagreements in the hotel business, there are still several unsolved issues and areas that need more inquiry.

Currently, most published research focuses on disputes between departments (such as housekeeping vs. front desk) inside individual hotels, limiting its application to larger industry issues. Future research should perform a thorough investigation of disagreements across different functional areas and sectors of the hotel business. Furthermore, it is necessary to conduct more advanced analyses of conflict resolution methods and interventions, even if previous research has identified the specific causes and consequences of conflicts between different departments.

Research inside hospitality firms should focus on implementing practical strategies to minimise conflicts, foster collaboration, and promote synergy across different departments (Cloke & Goldsmith, 2011). Studies frequently fail to consider the impact of the organisational environment and cultural diversity on interdepartmental conflicts.

The existence or absence of cooperation-promoting or discouraging organizational cultures, as well as cultural differences among employees, can have a significant impact on conflict dynamics.

To sum up, internal conflicts pose a big challenge in the hotel industry, greatly affecting both client happiness and the overall success of the organisation. This literature analysis highlights the intricate nature of interdepartmental conflicts by integrating current research findings, theoretical perspectives, and identified gaps. Subsequent research endeavours should address these knowledge gaps in conflict management approaches to facilitate harmonious interactions within hospitality firms.

According to the CPP Global Human Capital Report (2008), employees at different levels of the hierarchy must recognise that conflict is an unavoidable aspect of the workplace environment. The study's empirical research indicates that a significant majority of the workforce (85%) experiences conflict with different levels of frequency. In addition, the research shows that employees in the United States spend an average of 2.8 hours per week dealing with conflict-related problems.

This amounts to a total of around \$359 billion in paid hours for 2008. According to the same report, workers in the UK have a lower likelihood of conflict escalating than average, but they have a higher likelihood of experiencing unpleasant feelings as a result. 65% of employees in the UK acknowledge experiencing anger and irritation when confronted with conflict, in contrast to the 57% average across the entire poll. This suggests that employees resist stimulation easily, but once they do, their emotional intensity escalates significantly. In addition, around 30% of employees in the UK experience conflict that leads to their absence from work, which is higher than the average rate of 25%.

Interdepartmental competition for control and resources can give rise to rivalries, as certain organisational cultures inadvertently cultivate feelings of hatred and mistrust amongst departments. This animosity results in discontent, a lack of involvement, and decreased work excellence (de Wit et al., 2012). Conflict can induce worry and unhappiness among employees, especially when they perceive inadequate or delayed responses from other departments, which may lead to disengagement from work (Kahn, 1990; Afrahi et al., 2021).

3.0 Methods

A case study methodology is a research approach that entails a thorough investigation and examination of a particular case or phenomenon in its authentic real-world setting (Vignali and Hallier, 2015). The goal is to understand intricate issues or phenomena by thoroughly analysing them, frequently employing multiple sources of evidence (Roy et al., 2015). We can categorise case studies as qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods, depending on the specific research goals.

The case study offers multiple advantages, including the following:

- In-depth Investigation: Case studies enable researchers to examine specific cases, offering comprehensive and detailed insights thoroughly (Costello et al., 2017).
- Contextual understanding refers to a researcher's ability to comprehend phenomena within their real-life context, taking into account multiple factors that may impact the results (Mkono and Markwell, 2014).
- A thorough analysis: Case studies can capture complex interactions and relationships, offering a thorough understanding of the topic under study (Hancock, Algozzine, and Lim, 2021).
- Empirical evidence from real-world contexts can enhance theory-building or testing (Swanson and Chermack, 2013).

Researchers employ a variety of methods to collect data, including:

- Interviews: To obtain firsthand information, researchers conduct structured or semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders or participants (Ahlin, 2019).
- Observations: Making direct observations of the case or phenomenon in its natural environment can yield valuable qualitative data (Lofland et al., 2022).

Document analysis entails an in-depth examination of documents, reports, or archival records that are relevant to the case. This process can provide valuable historical or contextual insights (Bucheli and Wadhwani, 2013). ; Researchers can employ quantitative surveys to gather information on particular case components from a

broader sample (Kayesa and Shung-King, 2021). ; Focus Groups: Group discussions can gather a variety of viewpoints and insights on the case (Nyumba et al., 2018).

Case studies may have limitations.

- Generalisability: The findings derived from case studies may not be readily applicable to larger populations due to the narrow focus on specific cases or contexts (Golby et al., 2002).
- Subjectivity: Researchers' interpretations and biases may influence the analysis and conclusions drawn from the case study (Flyvbjerg, 2006).
- Resource-intensive: Case studies typically necessitate substantial time and resources for the collection and analysis of data, particularly for in-depth qualitative investigations (Gale et al., 2013).
- Narrow Focus: Although they may provide in-depth analysis, they only cover certain aspects of the case (Bickman and Rog, 2009).
- Ethical considerations in case study research can present challenges when it comes to maintaining confidentiality, privacy, and obtaining informed consent from participants (Petrova, Dewing, and Camilleri, 2014).

To summarise, the case study methodology is a valuable approach for investigating intricate phenomena in real-life environments, offering in-depth insights and contextual comprehension. However, researchers must be aware of their research limitations and use appropriate techniques to improve the rigor and validity of their studies.

4.0 Case Study Discussion

4.1 Bournemouth Highcliff Marriott Hotel

The Bournemouth Highcliff Marriott Hotel, located in the British coastal town of Bournemouth, is renowned for its opulent lodging, exceptional hospitality, and breathtaking setting (www.marriott.com, 2024). As a subsidiary of Marriott International, it upholds the brand's commitment to high quality and customer contentment.

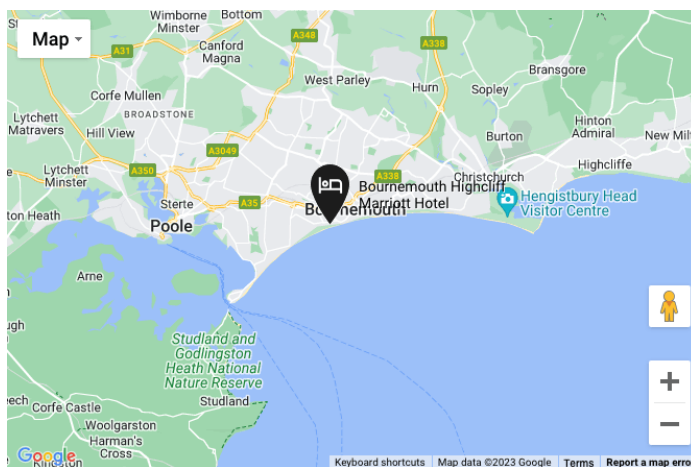


Fig.1: Bournemouth Highcliff Marriott Hotel location

Source: www.marriott.com, 2024

Bournemouth, located in Dorset, is renowned for its pristine beaches, vibrant nightlife, and rich cultural scene. The hotel's excellent location places guests near Bournemouth Pier, public gardens, plus numerous shops, restaurants, and entertainment venues. The hotel offers facilities catering to both business and leisure travelers. The rooms are both elegant and spacious, providing contemporary amenities and stylish furnishings to ensure a tranquil and comfortable experience. The hotel offers state-of-the-art event and meeting facilities, equipped with advanced technology, and staffed by professionals, catering to a wide range of events.



Fig.2: Bournemouth Highcliff Marriott Hotel view

Source: www.marriott.com, 2024

The hotel's restaurants provide a diverse selection of culinary options and tastes. Indulge in a relaxed morning meal, a delectable evening feast, or a rejuvenating alcoholic beverage at the hotel's dining establishments, which are sure to please all taste preferences.

Marriott hotels, such as the Bournemouth Highcliff Marriott Hotel, make a concerted effort to deliver exceptional service. The committed staff attends to the needs of guests, assisting them in finding accommodations and suggesting nearby attractions. The Bournemouth Highcliff Marriott Hotel offers a delightful experience to guests in the charming coastal town, with a perfect blend of sophistication, comfort, and convenience.



Fig.3: Bournemouth Central Gardens

Source: Bournemouth.co.uk (2020)



Fig.4: Bournemouth Beaches

Source: bournemouthj.co.uk (2020)

Marriott International (Marriott International, 2024), listed on the NASDAQ stock exchange under the ticker symbol MAR, is a leading global hotel operator known for its size and prominence. Presently, Marriott manages approximately 4,200 hotels across 79 countries and territories. The user's text consists of the number 1 enclosed in square brackets (Statista, 2022).

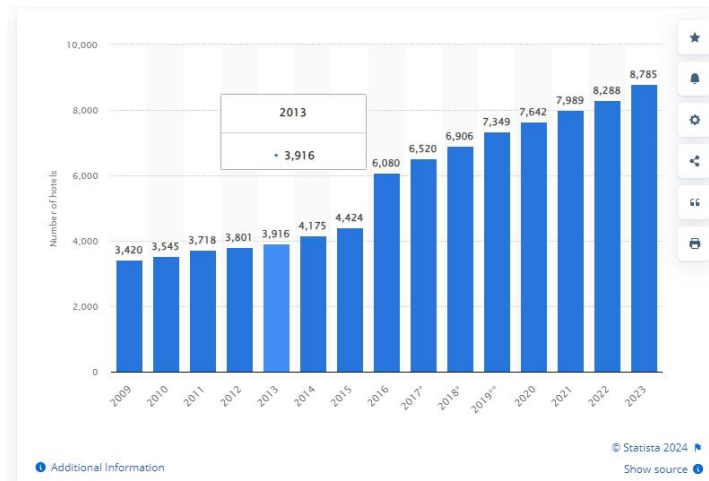


Fig. 5: Number of Marriott International hotels worldwide from 2009 to 2023

Source: Statista.com (2024)

The company's properties are managed under 19 distinct brands, including well-known names such as Ritz-Carlton and J.W. Marriott (Marriott.com, 2019). The features of these establishments encompass opulence, specialty shops, spacious accommodations, and residential-style hotels, in addition to vacation destinations.

Currently, Marriott is undergoing a prosperous expansion endeavour that has resulted in substantial revenue increases. Marriott's latest financial report, as of June 30, 2015, revealed revenues of \$14.22 billion, with a growth rate of 5.88%. The increase in revenue supports Marriott's decision to expand its inventory from 675,623 hotel rooms in 2013 to 714,765 in 2014 (Statista, 2024).

4.2 SWOT Analysis

Marriott International, with its extensive worldwide presence and strong market leadership (Fortune, 2020; Forbes, 2024), possesses numerous advantages that contribute to its dominant position in the hospitality industry (Touyalai, 2019; Schaal, 2019). Marriott benefits from a wide range of brands and strategic partnerships, which gives it a competitive advantage by taking advantage of cost efficiencies and strengthening its position as a pioneering industry leader (Ting, 2019; Marriott Inc.,

2019). The company's adherence to a rigorous code of conduct guarantees uniformity and excellence throughout its establishments, cultivating customer loyalty and confidence (Marriott International Newscenter (US), 2019).

However, Marriott faces significant vulnerabilities that require attention to maintain its competitive edge. The compromise of guest data and adverse public attention have significantly harmed its standing, underscoring the significance of strong data protection protocols and crisis management tactics (Gressin, 2018; Sarakshi, 2018; Wootson, 2017; Ma, 2018). Marriott's emphasis on catering to families may restrict its attractiveness to younger age groups, requiring modifications to attract the expanding millennial market (Net, 2018).

Notwithstanding these obstacles, Marriott is in a favourable position to take advantage of upcoming prospects. The changing population characteristics and the need for customised services create expansion opportunities while entering related industries, which could broaden its range of products and sources of income (Merlino, 2019; Glusac, 2019). To maintain competitiveness in a rapidly changing market, it will be crucial for Marriott to focus on emerging economies and adjust to digital trends.

However, Marriott faces substantial challenges, such as the profound effects of the global pandemic on the travel and tourism industry (Garber, 2020; Stankiewicz, 2020). The presence of strong competitors and the potential for economic downturns highlight the importance of strategic resilience and adaptive actions (Mariano, 2018). Geopolitical tensions and security risks, which present further challenges, may impact Marriott's operations and profitability (Grant, 2018; Voice of America, 2020).

To summarise, although Marriott International possesses various competitive advantages, it is essential for long-term success to address weaknesses and seize opportunities in a rapidly changing environment. Marriott must prioritise the reduction of threats and the preservation of its strategic flexibility to successfully navigate uncertainties and maintain its position as a global leader in the hospitality sector (Eschenbrenner et al., 2023).

4.3 PESTEL

Marriott International's PESTEL analysis identifies significant political, economic, social, cultural, technological, legal, and environmental factors that may affect the company's operations. Certain factors offer favourable conditions for expansion, while others present obstacles and risks.

In the realm of politics, the potential threat of terrorism and the prevailing political atmosphere in well-liked tourist spots (Voice of America, 2020) can disrupt global air travel and discourage individuals from embarking on trips, consequently affecting the demand for hotel accommodations (Crown Prosecution Service, 2020). Marriott faces the need to implement expensive security measures (www.linkedin.com, 2024) due to the risks posed by terrorist attacks specifically aimed at hotels and tourist sites (edition.cnn.com, 2009; Robins-Early, 2015; Agarwal, Page, and Mawby, 2021).

From an economic standpoint, the deceleration of economic expansion in China (He, 2024) and the persistent economic instability in Europe (CFI TEAM, 2022) can diminish individuals' purchasing power and their capacity to engage in travel. The elevated foreign exchange rates for the U.S. dollar abroad (www.jpmorgan.com, 2023), coupled with income inequality within the United States, additionally impact the demand for travel and hotel accommodations. Nevertheless, advantageous social factors such as the growing prevalence of international travel and increased expenditure by travellers create opportunities for Marriott (Kliger, 2023).

The emergence of online rental services such as Airbnb presents a substantial challenge to conventional hotel companies like Marriott, primarily due to technological factors (Helm, 2014). Due to their reduced operating expenses, Airbnb hosts can offer lower prices for their accommodations compared to hotels in various markets. Furthermore, there are legal considerations to consider, as services such as Airbnb are being closely examined and may face penalties for non-compliance with regulations (Cromarty and Barton, 2023; Nieuwland and van Melik, 2018). A higher minimum wage could impact Marriott by increasing labour costs and potentially reducing services (Butler, 2018).

Fuel prices have a direct influence on travel costs and hotel room demand, with decreasing oil prices potentially leading to an increase in demand for hotel accommodations (Yang and Timmermans, 2013; Oh and Hammitt, 2011). Nevertheless, the possible ramifications of climate change, such as escalating sea levels, inundations, and severe weather events, have the potential to adversely impact Marriott's business by causing harm to the resort and necessitating closures or relocations (University of Cambridge, 2014).

To effectively manage these factors, Marriott should diligently observe political developments, give priority to security measures, and adjust its strategies in response to shifting economic conditions. By adopting technological advancements and pursuing innovative strategies, Marriott can maintain its competitiveness in the presence of disruptive forces like Airbnb (www.ons.gov.uk, 2024). Furthermore, it will be imperative to actively interact with legal regulations and guarantee adherence. By addressing environmental concerns and implementing sustainable practices, one can effectively reduce risks and enhance long-term success.

Marriott can strategically position itself and take advantage of opportunities while also managing and reducing potential threats to its business by thoroughly evaluating and addressing political, economic, social, cultural, technological, legal, and environmental factors.

4.4 Competitor Analysis (Price vs Quality)

When comparing Marriott International Inc. to its competitors, it is critical to consider both pricing and the quality of their products or services. Marriott's revenue growth in the first quarter of 2024 was 6.45%, which is lower than its competitors' average revenue growth of 10.1% during the same period (csimarket.com, 2024). To stay competitive, Marriott could have to find better ways to generate revenue (csimarket.com, 2024).

MAR's comparison of Quarterly Growth Rates to its Peers
(in %)

Select the Relationship: **Peers** Select the Category: **Growth Rates**

COMPANY NAME	TICKER	REV. Y/Y	REV. SEQ.	INC. Y/Y	INC. SEQ.
Marriott International Inc	1 Q MAR	6.45 %	-1.94 %	-25.5 %	-33.49 %
Mgm Resorts International	1 Q MGM	13.17 %	0.18 %	-37.54 %	-21.04 %
Loews Corp	1 Q L	11.84 %	-0.63 %	20.05 %	1.68 %
Intercontinental Hotels Group Plc	4 Q IHG	31.85 %	31.85 %	41.89 %	41.89 %
Caesars Entertainment Inc	1 Q CZR	-3.11 %	-2.04 %	-	-
Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc	1 Q HLT	12.21 %	-1.88 %	28.23 %	78.67 %
Las Vegas Sands Corp	1 Q LVS	39.58 %	1.51 %	302.07 %	24.31 %
H World Group Limited	4 Q HTHT	53.33 %	53.33 %	-	-
Hyatt Hotels Corporation	1 Q H	2.02 %	3.25 %	800 %	1907.69 %

More Growth vs Competitors

List of Competitors by Company

- Performance
- Growth Rates
- Company Data
- Efficiency
- Mgmt. Effect.
- Valuation

List of Competitors by Segment

- Market Share
- Revenue Growth
- Income Growth

Fig. 6: List of MAR's Competitors and Stock Performance

Source: csimarket.com (2024)

Marriott surpasses its competitors in terms of profitability, boasting a net margin of 9.44%. This suggests that Marriott is attaining superior levels of profitability in comparison to other companies in its industry (Marriott International, 2024). We can attribute this to the implementation of efficient cost management practices and the optimal utilisation of resources.

When assessing the relationship between price and quality, examining the value proposition Marriott offers compared to its competitors is essential (Krupskyi et al., 2019). Factors such as the standard of accommodations, level of customer service, and brand reputation heavily influence the customer's perception of quality (Dedeolu and Demirer, 2015).

To perform a thorough evaluation of the pricing and quality of Marriott International and its competitors (Younadam 2023, Hospitality On. 2023), we will examine certain data points and metrics that demonstrate their market position and performance:

Marriott International offers a range of prices across its many brands, measured by the average daily rate (ADR) (Marriott International, 2023).

Luxury Segment: The average daily rate (ADR) at The Ritz-Carlton varies from \$350 to \$1,000 or more per night, depending on the specific location and type of

accommodation (The Ritz Hotel London, 2024). The average daily rate (ADR) at JW Marriott normally falls between \$250 and \$500 per night (Booking.com, 2024).

Upper-Upscale Segment: The average daily rate (ADR) for Marriott Hotels & Resorts ranges from \$150 to \$300 per night (www.marriott.com, 2024). The average daily rate (ADR) for Sheraton Hotels & Resorts varies from \$120 to \$250 per night (Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, 2024).

Upscale Segment: The average daily rate (ADR) for a room at Courtyard by Marriott is between \$100 and \$200 per night (www.marriott.com, 2024). The average daily rate (ADR) for Residence Inn by Marriott normally falls between \$120 and \$250 per night (Residence Inn, 2024).

Quality Indicators: Marriott typically achieves visitor happiness scores (GSAT) that surpass 80%, indicating a notable degree of visitor happiness throughout its locations (Marriott International Newscenter (US), 2024).

The Marriott Bonvoy Programme illustrates a significant expression of brand recognition and loyalty, as evidenced by its substantial membership of approximately 203 million individuals globally. This figure highlights the programme's extensive reach and underpins a deep intensity of engagement and commitment to the Marriott brand among consumers (Marriott International Newscenter (US), 2024).

4.5 Competitor Data

Hilton Worldwide Holdings: The price range for ADR (average daily rate) across brands is as follows: Waldorf Astoria: The average ADR ranges from \$400 to \$1,000 per night (UpgradedPoints.com, 2020). Hilton Hotels & Resorts have an average daily rate (ADR) that falls between \$150 and \$300 per night (Statista, 2024).

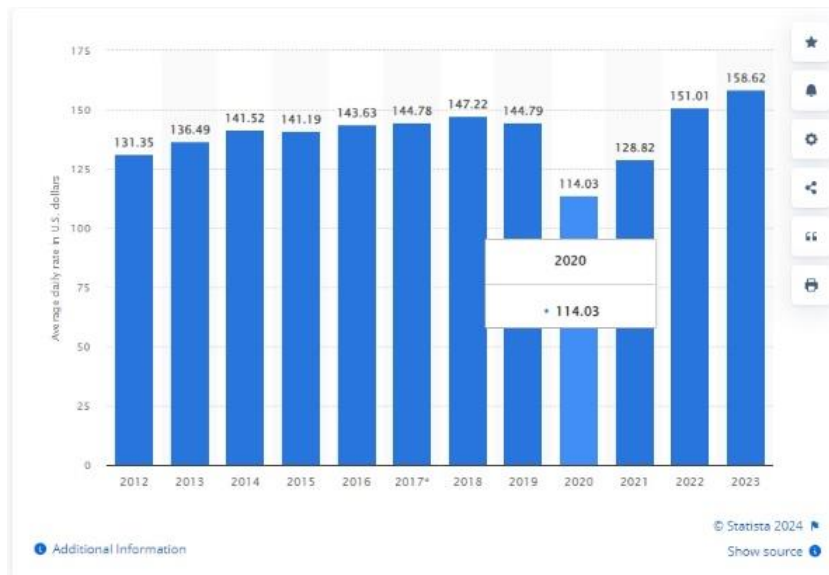


Fig. 7: Average daily rate of Hilton Worldwide Holdings hotels 2012-2023

Source: statista.com (2024)

The InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) offers a range of brands at varying prices. The average daily rate (ADR) for InterContinental hotels usually falls within the range of \$250 to \$500 or more per night (InterContinental Hotels Group PLC, 2024). The average daily rate (ADR) for a stay at Holiday Inn Express ranges from \$80 to \$150 per night (InterContinental Hotels Group PLC, 2024).

AccorHotels' Price Range of Brands (ADR) is available on all.accor.com as of 2024. Sofitel: The average daily rate (ADR) ranges from \$200 to \$500+ per night. Ibis: The average daily rate (ADR) usually falls between \$50 and \$150 per night.

Hyatt Hotels Corporation has published a report on the Price Range of Brands (ADR) (Hyatt Newsroom, 2024). The average daily rate (ADR) at Park Hyatt ranges from \$300 to \$800+ per night. The average daily rate (ADR) at the Hyatt Regency ranges from \$150 to \$350 per night.

Key observations and market positioning: Marriott competes in different market segments by providing a variety of price options and quality standards that cater to unique client preferences.

Market Share and Revenue Performance: Overseas markets primarily drive Marriott's global revenue per available room (RevPAR) growth, which exceeds 4%, demonstrating its robust market presence and revenue generation skills (Marriott International, 2023).

Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty: The large number of members and active involvement in Marriott Bonvoy demonstrate Marriott's ability to foster brand loyalty and encourage customers to return.

Overall, the report emphasises Marriott International's effective pricing methods, excellent quality standards, and strong market position compared to major competitors in the hospitality sector. Marriott's wide range of brands and robust customer loyalty programmes contribute to its dominant position and financial success in the worldwide hotel industry.

5.0 Theme Exploration

5.1 Findings

According to Fisher (1977) and Thakore (2013), conflict arises when the interests of several parties meet, resulting in possible antagonism or incompatibility. Intergroup conflict begins between distinct social groups, such as ethnic or racial groups, different departments, or levels within the same organisation, as well as between unions and management (Al Ramiah and Hewstone, 2013; Brown et al., 1986). This type of conflict, which frequently begins with competition for a few resources, poses a substantial obstacle that societies have attempted to address by implementing regulatory frameworks such as labour negotiations and mediation (Harolds and Wood, 2006; Behfar *et al.*, 2008; Alper et al., 2000).

Fisher (2012) asserts that social-psychological mechanisms are pivotal in the dynamics of intergroup conflict. Individuals within these groups tend to develop stereotypes, which are simplistic and negative perceptions about the other group (BC Campus, 2014). Moreover, these group members often attribute their difficulties to the opposing group, a practice known as scapegoating, and engage in discriminatory actions against them (Hersh, 2013).

The defining features of intergroup conflict are widespread, not just in racial or ethnic tensions within society but also in the organisational environment (Bar-Tal, 2011; Cuhadar and Dayton, 2011). These conflicts worsen and become more deeply rooted when the groups' identities are believed to be in danger (Lake and Rothchild, 1996; Hardin, 1997). Unresolved and destructive intergroup conflict has substantial economic and social consequences for society (Mack and Snyder, 1957; De Dreu, 2011; Meyer, 2004).

Communication breakdowns, organisational structure obstacles, and personal conflicts at the individual level frequently intensify the initial phase of conflict (Robbins et al., 2013; Kurtz, 2004; Smagorinsky and Smith, 2001).

Communication is an important factor in conflict development, as both inadequate and excessive communication can contribute to an increased propensity for conflict (Menon et al., 2020; Stanley et al., 2002; Assael, 1969). Internal communication challenges can arise in organisational environments such as hotels, leading to misconceptions and subsequent internal disputes (Robbins & Judge, 2015; Torunn et al., 2009).

Moreover, the intricacies of organisational structure, such as its size and job specialisations, enhance the probability of conflict by generating a greater number of overlapping interests across individuals and departments (Rout and Omiko, 2007; Bedeian, 1984). Unclear or uncertain roles, as well as conflicts over power between different groups, worsen conflicts within organisations (Jehn and Bendersky, 2003; Folger et al., 2021).

Personal differences and disparities in values can also cause conflict, as differing perceptions and assessments can lead to disagreements and conflicts in relationships (Kennedy and Pronin, 2008; Jehn, 1997; Jehn, 1995). These confrontations, which frequently revolve around issues such as performance, wage expectations, and promotion, impede team cohesion and productivity (Schneider, 1988; Latham et al., 2005).

During the conflict process, when individuals become emotionally invested, tensions and hostility increase, transitioning the conflict into its second stage of cognition and personalisation (Galinsky, 2002; Yao et al., 2019). Conflict management tactics encompass a range of cooperative and aggressive approaches, including competing, collaborating, avoiding, appeasing, or compromising (Mayer, 2012; Chanin, 1980).

In the end, disagreements can result in either functional or dysfunctional consequences, with moderate degrees of conflict enhancing group efficiency and the quality of decision-making (Moye and Langfred, 2004; Marlow et al., 2018). Organisational success faces significant challenges due to dysfunctional conflicts, characterised by emotional distress and reduced productivity (Omisore and Abiodun, 2014).

Ultimately, the use of negotiation tactics such as distributive and integrative bargaining can lead to favourable outcomes (Barry and Friedman, 1998; Weingart et al., 1996). However, it is important to prioritise win-win solutions through integrative bargaining to cultivate long-term partnerships and achieve favourable results (Thomas *et al.*, 2018; Monaco and Pastorelli, 2013). This technique differs from distributive bargaining, which frequently results in one party perceiving a sense of disadvantage (Trumpy, 2008; Chung and Hensher, 2015). Conflict, according to Robbins et al. (2013) and Omene and Richard (2021), arises when the interests of several parties meet, resulting in possible antagonism or incompatibility. Breakdowns in communication, obstacles in organisational structure, and personal conflicts at the individual level frequently intensify the initial phase of conflict (Kelly et al., 2002).

Communication is an important factor in conflict development, as both inadequate and excessive communication can contribute to an increased propensity for conflict (Assael, 1969). In organisational environments such as hotels, internal communication challenges can arise, leading to misconceptions and subsequent internal disputes (Robbins & Judge, 2015).

5.2 Analysis

The Bournemouth Marriott Highcliff Hotel fosters an atmosphere of cordiality and mutual respect among its associates (www.linkedin.com, 2014; Marriott International Inc., 2013). The sales, events, and banquet departments have a positive and interactive relationship. Associates participate in friendly conversations, share their experiences during time off, and enjoy meals together during lunch breaks (*Marriott International Reviews*, 2024). Regarding personal attributes, each participant exhibited likeable, amiable, and sociable personalities. They show a strong inclination towards self-motivation and actively take the lead in client relationships, understanding the significance of being proactive to guarantee success.

Regarding competencies, the events, banqueting, and sales associates demonstrated a profound understanding of the products, a sharp fashion sense, the skill to appropriately evaluate clients, and the competency to efficiently use their customer call books. We saw that these sales associates consistently depended on their

empathic abilities, which refers to their capacity to understand and perceive the reactions of others (Greenberg & Greenberg, 1991, p. 690). They were able to fully embrace client issues as their own while also adjusting their behaviour and approach to match consumer preferences and the present stage of the relationship.

The literature frequently ignores empathy, a crucial component of effective salesmanship (Greenberg & Greenberg, 1991; Agnihotri and Krush, 2015; Limbu et al., 2016). It improves people's comprehension, resulting in more accurate forecasts of their behaviour or responses. In addition, empathy enhances closeness by bolstering the social dimensions of partnerships (Mcbane, 1990).

The Events & Banquet Department in the hospitality business has a crucial role in crafting unforgettable experiences for guests (Berridge, 2007; Aronds, 2018). They work collaboratively with customers to organise and implement a variety of events hosted at the hotel (Davidson and Hyde, 2014; Berridge, 2007). Event planners are responsible for managing logistics, which include coordinating the scheduling of conference rooms, banquet halls, and other event venues (Silvers, 2012; Allen, 2002). Coordinators oversee several aspects of events, including managing guest lists, organising seating arrangements, and ensuring the proper functioning of audiovisual equipment (Kilkenny, 2011; Montgomery and Strick, 1994). Event experts set hotels apart in a competitive market and make a memorable impression on guests by incorporating creativity into themes, location choices, interactive activities, and carefully crafted cuisines (Ferdinand and Kitchen, 2012; Cornelissen, 2022). The events department ensures visitor happiness and the hotel's overall prosperity (Wagen, 2010; Gretzel, 2018).

The primary objective of the Events and Banqueting Department is to offer nourishment and beverages to the guests (Rutherford et al., 2007). This feature is present not only in hotels but also in various domains such as restaurants, corporate cafeterias, hospital cafeterias, airlines, and trains. The primary function of this department is to provide sustenance and beverages to individuals while catering to their diverse requirements. Its primary objective is to attain customer satisfaction in addition to fulfilling its function (Cracknell and Nobis, 1985). The primary role of the Events & Banquet Department is to oversee and optimise the service quality and operational efficiency of various areas within the establishment, including the

restaurant, room service, bar, cafe, lounge, and coffee shop, with the aim of generating favourable business outcomes (Tushar, Md. Khalekuzzaman, 2023).

To ensure the effective implementation of the department's standards, all positions within this department require employees to consistently maintain a clean, friendly, polite, and courteous demeanour (Mullins, 2001; Aliyu, 2017). Furthermore, the employees must possess proficient communication and language skills (Blue and Harun, 2003; Rahim and Tazijan, 2011), derive satisfaction from engaging with others (Lu et al., 2016; Varela González and García Garazo, 2006), demonstrate agility and expertise, and exhibit a high level of business acumen and innovation when delivering services to both external and internal guests (Nieves, Quintana, and Osorio, 2014), while also maintaining communication with the sales and marketing department (Musadad, Dianita, and Dirgantara, 2021; Ahyia Adu-Oppong and Agyin-Birikorang, 2014).

The sales and marketing team is crucial to generating hotel revenue (Hayes, Hayes, and Hayes, 2021; Keh, Chu, and Xu, 2006) by selling event rooms to various clients, including individual guests, corporate clients, and group bookings. In addition, the sales and marketing team is responsible for managing the front office operations, including renting rooms, setting room rates, and overseeing meeting room bookings. They generate extra sources of income by offering spa services, dining choices, and exclusive packages. Consequently, the sales and marketing team must be able to actively pursue and document the desired objective, typically involving interaction with attendees during group meetings (Smith, 2007; Liberman, 2010).

The team formulates sales strategies by identifying prospective clients, conducting market trend analysis, and establishing specific sales objectives (Linoff and Berry, 2011; Rygielski, Wang, and Yen, 2002). They devise promotional efforts to entice the company, utilising distinct selling propositions and diverse media (Jain et al., 2023; Arseculeratne and Yazdanifard, 2014).

Establishing relationships through customised engagements, active listening, and proactive communication cultivates trust with clients (King et al., 2014; Rane, Achari, and Choudhary, 2023). Outstanding service and dependability lead to customers

returning and providing favourable referrals (Buttle, 1998; v. Wangenheim and Bayón, 2007).

The relationship between the Events & Banquet Department and the Sales & Marketing Department also extends to banquet events and meeting room organization. Nevertheless, a significant challenge arises from the working relationship between the Sales and Marketing Department and the banquet, particularly due to a lack of coordination. This lack of coordination results in financial losses for the hotel. Nebel asserts in Rutherford & O'Fallon (2010) that optimal execution of activity coordination in a hotel is necessary to produce productive outcomes.

Communication plays a crucial role in facilitating the coordination of activities among different departments. If communication becomes stagnant or problematic, it will hinder coordination and make it ineffective. According to Raja & Sinurat (2020), effective communication is crucial for resolving conflicts that arise between different levels within an organisation. In addition, effective communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, are crucial for hotel staff and managers in the sustainable hotel industry (ČuićTankovi et al., 2021).

The conflict between the sales department and the events and banquet departments revolves around the sales team offering event packages at discounted pricing, which results in the events and banquet teams having to work with limited budgets (Silvers, 2012; Allen, 2010). This scenario sometimes arises because of a lack of synchronisation in the goals of different departments. The sales team prioritises closing transactions and achieving high bookings by offering reasonable prices, whereas the events team aims to uphold quality while working within budget limitations (Nguyen, 2020; Venkataraman and Pinto, 2023). Insufficient communication and teamwork primarily cause the gap, leaving the events team to deal with the consequences of sales decisions (Lewis, 2000; Zaleznik, 1990).

To resolve this issue, it is essential to cultivate a culture of effective communication and mutual comprehension among the departments (Fielding, 2006; Sharif, 2024). Regular interdepartmental meetings can be held to facilitate the synchronisation of objectives and the examination of the practicality of sales tactics from an operational

perspective (Swaim et al., 2016; Rangarajan et al., 2018). It guarantees that the commitments made during the sales phase are feasible and mutually accepted by integrating planning procedures (O'Leary-Kelly and Flores, 2002; Simatupang, Wright, and Sridharan, 2002). It is critical to provide effective means of communication to immediately and efficiently resolve any misconceptions that may arise (Ulmer, Sellnow, and Seeger, 2010; Schein, 1993).

An alternative strategy involves aligning the goals and motivations of both departments, possibly by linking a percentage of the sales team's incentives to the effective implementation of events (Oliva and Watson, 2010; McKenzie and Shilling, 1998). This guarantees that securing a sale does not compromise the quality of the events (Acquisti et al., 2006). Providing education to each department regarding the difficulties and processes of other departments helps enhance empathy and cultivate a collaborative work environment (Witziers et al., 1999; Filho et al., 2023).

By implementing a well-defined conflict resolution procedure, it is possible to prevent conflict escalation by offering a clear and defined process to resolve grievances as they occur (Caselles et al., 2013; Ahn and Choi, 2009). Furthermore, incorporating client input regarding event implementation can serve as a concrete indicator of how sales strategies impact the level of service, fostering greater unity within departments in pursuit of the shared objective of customer satisfaction (Homburg, Jozić, and Kuehnl, 2017).

By endeavouring to connect sales strategies with operational realities (Mcnair et al., 1990), organisations can foster a more cohesive and efficient working relationship between the sales department and the events and banquet departments, resulting in improved outcomes for both clients and the company (Al-Omari, Alomari, and Aljawarneh, 2020).

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6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

To enhance the development of ideas and expand on the topic of workplace conflict in the hospitality industry, it is crucial to gather valuable insights from credible sources such as the Advisory, Conciliation, and Arbitration Service (ACAS) and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). These sites offer excellent research and commentary on workplace conflict, providing insights into the most effective methods for resolving conflicts and managing them, specifically in the hospitality industry.

ACAS states that workplace conflict can emerge due to several circumstances, such as ineffective communication, contradictory objectives, and disparities in working methods or personalities (ACAS, 2023). Effective conflict resolution is vital in the hospitality business, where customer service and teamwork play a significant role. It is necessary to maintain a positive work atmosphere and ensure the delivery of high-quality service (ACAS, 2020). The ACAS emphasises the significance of promptly intervening, maintaining transparent communication, and employing mediation methods to effectively address conflicts and prevent their escalation (www.acas.org.uk, n.d.).

In addition, the CIPD highlights the importance of leadership and management in both preventing and handling workplace conflict. Leaders in the hospitality business must have excellent communication skills, emotional intelligence, and the capacity to cultivate a culture of trust and collaboration among their team members. The CIPD promotes proactive conflict management tactics in the hotel industry, including regular feedback sessions, team-building activities, and well-defined policies and processes for managing conflicts (CIPD, 2015).

By integrating knowledge from ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation, and Arbitration Service) and the CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development), hospitality organisations can enhance their comprehension of workplace conflict and establish efficient techniques for resolving conflicts. This may entail delivering training sessions to managers on conflict resolution strategies, developing well-defined routes for communication and feedback, and fostering a working culture characterised by

transparency and mutual respect. Furthermore, the incorporation of mediation and dispute resolution procedures can effectively tackle issues at an early stage, therefore averting any negative effects on staff morale and organisational performance within the hotel industry.

Ultimately, utilising the resources and assistance offered by ACAS and the CIPD can improve dispute resolution methods in the hospitality sector (Harris, Tuckman, and Snook, 2012; Antcliff and Saundry, 2009), resulting in a more efficient and harmonious workplace (Song et al., 2019; Holland, 2013). Organisations in the hospitality sector can minimise the harmful effects of workplace conflicts (Poulston, 2008; O'Neill and Davis, 2011) and foster a culture of cooperation and mutual respect among employees by implementing effective conflict management techniques and proactive initiatives (Lynn Fitzpatrick, 2007; Mohr and Spekman, 1994).

The scope of operation and administration in the hotel and hospitality industry encompasses various aspects of managing and overseeing a successful establishment. This includes handling customer reservations, managing front desk operations, overseeing housekeeping and maintenance services, coordinating food and beverage services, and managing the overall financial and administrative responsibilities of the establishment (Salazar, 2018; Schuckert, Liu, and Law, 2015).

In terms of operations, hotel and hospitality management involves ensuring the smooth and efficient operation of the various departments within the establishment. This includes managing staff, implementing operational procedures, and ensuring that the guest experience meets or exceeds expectations. Operations also involve managing inventory, procurement, and quality control to ensure that the establishment operates at its optimal level (Walker, 2021; Cho et al., 2012).

On the administrative side, hotel and hospitality management involves handling the financial and administrative aspects of the establishment. This includes budgeting, forecasting, financial reporting, and managing costs to ensure profitability. Administrative tasks also include managing payroll, human resources, and compliance with industry regulations and standards (Sharma, 2006; Hayes and Ninemeier, 2009).

Overall, the scope of operation and administration in the hotel and hospitality industry is vast, encompassing a wide range of responsibilities that are essential for the successful operation and management of a hotel or hospitality establishment (Fang, Ou, and Fu, 2022).

8.0 Reflective Account

My time on placement at the Marriott Highcliff Hotel in Bournemouth has been life-changing, giving me priceless insights into the inner workings of the hotel sector. During this time, I had the opportunity to see directly the difficulties in upholding high standards of service, the need for teamwork, and the intricacies of interdepartmental communication. To better understand my observations and lessons, I will concentrate on guest relations, conflict resolution, interdepartmental dynamics, and personal development.

The need for interdepartmental communication to guarantee efficient operations and exceptional visitor experiences was one of the most obvious things I learned during my internship. Like many in the hospitality industry, the Marriott Highcliff Hotel mostly depends on the smooth cooperation of several departments, including housekeeping, front desk, food and beverage, and maintenance.

Though the hotel has a stellar reputation, I saw several communication issues that frequently resulted in ineffective operations. Sometimes the front desk and housekeeping staff found it difficult to coordinate room readiness, which caused check-in delays and unhappy guests. In a similar vein, sometimes misunderstandings between the service and cooking workers resulted in the wrong orders being served, detracting from the overall eating experience.

These problems made clear how important strong routes and procedures are to guarantee that information moves between departments without hiccups. Using technology for real-time information and scheduling regular interdepartmental meetings were two tactics I saw that might greatly increase efficiency and coordination.

Any workplace will unavoidably experience conflicts, and the hotel sector is no exception. I saw all kinds of conflicts during my placement, from little miscommunications to bigger disagreements that affected team spirit and output. The front desk and housekeeping crews got into a fight on one memorable occasion over how to prioritise cleaning the rooms. Conflict arose from different viewpoints on guest demands vs. operational effectiveness. For me, watching how the hotel

management handled this was enlightening. They led a mediation-based conversation in which both sides could voice their grievances and work together to find a solution. In addition to fixing the immediate problem, this strategy promoted mutual respect and open communication.

I took away from this encounter the need for mediation and conflict resolution expertise for leaders. Finding points of agreement and active listening are essential to good dispute resolution. These abilities are necessary to keep the workplace pleasant and to prevent disputes from getting worse and interfering with business.

Guest satisfaction is a pillar of the hospitality business, and my placement gave me many chances to talk with visitors and learn about their expectations and experiences. The growing value of customised service was one important finding. Nowadays, visitors look for experiences that are special and one-of-a-kind, not merely a comfortable stay. I saw firsthand how the hotel personnel went above and beyond to meet unusual requests, keep track of visitors' tastes, and offer customised advice. Higher satisfaction and loyalty were a result of the much-improved guest experience brought about by this degree of detail.

Handling complaints from guests was another crucial area where I learned a lot. Even with the greatest efforts to deliver outstanding service, complaints may unavoidably arise. I found that the management of these concerns significantly influences the visitor's perception of the hotel. Effective complaint resolution requires empathy, active listening, prompt action, and follow-up to ensure complete problem resolution. Seeing seasoned employees manage complaints taught me the importance of remaining composed, businesslike, and solution focused.

Apart from the professional observations, my placement experience made a major contribution to my own development.

The hotel's hectic atmosphere first overwhelmed me. But as I learned more about the procedures and accumulated experience, I started to feel more certain about my skills. Assuming duties such as liaising with several departments, answering questions from visitors, and handling small problems on my own helped me become more confident and adept at solving problems

The placement further refined my soft skills, particularly communication, teamwork, and time management. To interact with guests and associates, one had to communicate well. I developed my ability to modify my communication style for various circumstances, such as giving the housekeeping staff precise directions or greeting visitors with warmth and friendliness.

Teamwork was another crucial component of my experience. In the hospitality sector, teamwork is crucial; hence, I discovered the value of being a trustworthy and encouraging team player. Colleagues from many departments helped me to understand their responsibilities and the difficulties they encounter on a deeper level. Throughout my placement, I became rather adept at time management. The dynamic character of the hotel setting demanded that I efficiently prioritise and juggle several jobs. I discovered effective time management, which allowed me to do all jobs on time without sacrificing quality.

All things considered, my employment at the Marriott Highcliff Hotel was incredibly fulfilling and instructive. I now have a thorough knowledge of the hospitality sector, especially the value of efficient guest relations, dispute resolution, and interdepartmental communication. In addition, the experience greatly advanced my own development by enhancing my self-esteem, soft skills, and time management skills. These knowledge and abilities will surely come in handy when I work in the hospitality sector, as they will enable me to successfully join any team and provide clients with outstanding service.

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